

Tim Brennan's Statement  
Investors Against Genocide Audio Press Conference  
March 19, 2008

My name is Tim Brennan, and I serve as Treasurer of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, a faith community with roots in this country going back to the Pilgrims and Puritans. There are more than 1,000 Unitarian Universalist churches across the country. As Treasurer, I steward the Association's resources and advise the national leadership and individual congregations on financial matters.

A large part of the UUA's retirement fund, which I oversee, is invested in Fidelity mutual funds. We have learned that many of those funds derive profits from companies abetting the Darfur genocide. Unitarian Universalists affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all people, especially those whose voices are silenced by oppression and violence. New federal legislation signed by the president gives pension fund managers the latitude to divest from companies doing business with nations sponsoring genocide. As Eric said earlier, many are doing just that. As a fiduciary, I believe that divestment is the financially prudent choice. Fidelity needs to hear what more and more of us in the financial community already understand – Genocide is a great moral evil, and genocide is bad for business.

For Unitarian Universalists the choice is clear. There needs to be a line – some basic human value, rooted in the principles of morality and decency — that all of us, as respected members of society, can agree not to cross. Genocide is not just another social ill. As a people of faith, as Unitarian Universalists, we cannot accept genocide as a necessary evil, or a side effect of successful investing. We have the opportunity to use our financial assets to witness against the unspeakable evil of genocide. We believe it is our moral duty to do so.